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THE
ASSISTANT
LIBRARIAN

FORMERLY "THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT"

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE A.A.L.

University of Michigan
General Library
Library Science Study Hall

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THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. NO. 1

JANUARY, 1955

OFFICERS OF THE A.A.L., 1955

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HON. SOLICITORS: Messrs. Metcalfe, Copeman & Pettefar,
3 and 4, Clement's Inn, W.C.2.

A NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am happy to take advantage of the pleasant post-war practice of allowing the President to address you through the *Assistant Librarian*. I would first like to thank you for the honour you have paid me in electing me, through your Council, to this high office for 1955.

A succession of Presidents have exhorted the younger members of the profession to come forward and take the place of the "grey-beards" on the Council. I am assured by the Honorary Editor that there is no shortage of aspiring contributors to the pages of the *Assistant Librarian*, but where are the aspirants for election as National Councillors? The recent election produced seven candidates for six offices. Of these seven, two have served as National Councillor since 1937 and four for some years since the war. Where, then, are the Councillors to take the place of those who have served well in the past and who continue to agree to their nomination through their spirit of service? How long are the many going to continue to rely on the strength of the few who have done more than their share of the work wisely and well for many years? The Association should be served by two

categories of Councillor: the steady, painstaking workers and those with ideas abreast of the times, to ensure progress and alertness. The latter can often make their contribution and retire from the scene. I would like to compare the Council to a garden in which we have too many perennials and not enough annuals! In a profession which is welcoming more and more of the fair sex, it is to be expected that more of them would be eager to take an active and vocal part in the affairs of the Association.

It could be that in this Diamond Jubilee year we shall do well to introduce anew a statement of aims and ambitions, to show a clear-cut policy. If any of you find your Association not what you want it to be, or not doing what you want it to do, then by writing to your Divisional Officers, to your National Councillors, to the Hon. Editor or to me, you can do much to initiate changes. I can assure you of a sympathetic hearing to any constructive criticism that you may care to offer.

I personally feel that the aims of the Association of Assistant Librarians should be to inspire enthusiasm for the library profession, and I hope that 1955 will be an enthusiastic year for all of us.

Croydon.

J. S. BRISTOW.

OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

LEARNING AND LIBRARIANSHIP

In your November issue, Mr. Lancashire airs some justified complaints about L.A. correspondence courses, but his solution is not the best one. I would suggest that he does what I did after one experience of an L.A. course, and that is, teach himself. By doing this he will save money and pass his examinations more quickly. I have passed three parts of the Registration Examination in eighteen months by making up my own courses of study. This is not as difficult as it sounds; with the aid of the Guide to Examinations it is possible to draw up a reading list and a scheme of work to cover the period chosen. Surely a person who has, or thinks he has, the qualifications to guide others in their studies and reading is capable of drawing up and sticking to his own timetable. I do claim to know something of what I am talking about on this matter as I am a qualified teacher, and I have passed examinations in the past with correspondence courses from both Oxford and Cambridge, and anyone who has used those aids to study would never spend a penny of hard-earned money on an L.A. course.

I read the articles and letters in the *Assistant Librarian* regularly, and I should like to make two points. Firstly, are assistant librarians supposedly of such low intelligence that they have to be given so many light-hearted, would-be funny, and often not very grammatical articles? For example, this month [November] I find on the first page of a professional journal an article which reads: "This means you, we thought . . . We gingerly opened the door". Quite frankly it sounds more like Children's Hour.

My second point raises a more serious matter. Nearly every month I read letters and articles from library assistants grumbling about their work, their hours or their pay. It seems to me that the answer is very simple—get another job. Everyone entering the library profession knows that the hours are irregular, that there are examinations to study for, and they also know the salary scale. Therefore why grumble afterwards? The solution lies in their own hands—there are plenty of jobs in other spheres where the hours are regular and there are no examinations, and the library profession will be well rid of the malcontents. Librarianship is a vocation, not a job, and it is one which I had to wait fifteen years to enter, but I am proud to be a junior librarian rather than a headmistress.

JOAN FIRTH, A.C.P. (Mrs.).

[Setting aside the fact that correspondence courses are provided by the A.A.L., and that Mr. Lancashire made no complaint whatever about them in his article, Mrs. Firth's letter still contains many assertions which call for comment.

There is a deeper purpose in study than the passing of examinations, but anyone who has passed three parts of the Final Examination in eighteen months with the aid of correspondence courses—as has your Hon. Editor—will be unimpressed by her more modest claims for private study. That not everyone can do this—including apparently Mrs. Firth—underlines the point made below by Miss Wilden-Hart that students are individuals who must suit their methods to their temperaments. The method of study appropriate to an experienced ex-schoolteacher is not necessarily that best suited to the junior assistant in her teens.

We have not found librarians unduly preoccupied with grumbles about their work, their irregular hours or their pay. Those misfits who do find the hours irksome seem usually to lose no time in following Mrs. Firth's excellent advice. Nor is criticism usually directed against the examination system as such, but rather against the ineptitude exhibited here and there in the syllabus and in

particular examinations.

Many of us who claim to have a sense of vocation prefer not to be abused on that account, and without the concerted efforts of librarians and others our pay and conditions of service might by now have been insufficient even to attract Mrs. Firth from the teaching profession (where also, we gather, they are interested in both vocation and remuneration).—Hon. Ed.]

IDEAS ON TEACHING

Mr. Lancashire suggests [November issue] that the study timetable outside the classroom should be systematized by the tutor. This is impracticable. No two students need to do the same amount of work. A class is composed of individuals; some have read widely, others can hardly read; some have access to most of the required books, others find difficulty in obtaining even the essential ones; some are married (with responsibilities), others are single in noisy digs. Even supposing that all the class *want* to learn (and only a very naïve tutor would assume this), certain parts of the syllabus come more easily to some than to others.

And what of the mnemonic aids that Mr. Lancashire demands as his right as a student? A tutor should (if he has any integrity) teach the *subject* first, and aim at the *exam.* afterwards. Repetition does *not* ensure learning (how well the examiners must know this!). I would suggest that an interest in the subject would get the student halfway to success; the ability to think for himself would get him through the exam. The tutor's task, therefore, is not to cram facts into the heads facing him every week. Rather is it to arouse their interest, and to make them apply their knowledge to other facts they already know.

Rather than cut down the syllabus into a dried mass of essential but indigestible facts, is it not better for the tutor to teach the background of the subject, leaving the student to swot up the text books? We have a few adequate text books in librarianship now: but the background to all L.A. subjects is inadequately covered, in inaccessible places and often dispersed very widely, and no student, even if

he had time to locate this material, would have time to read it all. I would like to suggest that this is where the tutor should step in. He is not a cramming text book; he should be an authority on his subject. But that is another story!

MARION WILDEN-HART,
Assistant, Kensington P.L.

Bearing in mind that the attitude of the student matters more than the quality of the teacher, let us discover the effect on the student's attitude of the teaching methods proposed by Mr. Lancashire. The student starts his course with, let us hope, some enthusiasm for his subject. He should have already gained, through his library experience, that broad outline of the subject which Mr. Lancashire thinks so essential. Now he is anxious to settle down and learn something. What happens? He has the whole syllabus shot at him in a month; he is confused, because a little knowledge is a dangerous thing; more important, he starts to lose interest. He loses interest because there is nothing new to attract him. When the tutor gets round to Milton for the third time he is bored. He has already heard of Milton. More dangerous still, he probably thinks he knows all there is to know about Milton. "Why bother to go to any more classes? We only do something we finished months ago. I can learn just as much looking through my notes." The twin enemies of frustration and over-confidence have penetrated very deeply.

D. S. HOPE,
Assistant, Croydon P.L.

[Other letters criticising Mr. Lancashire's ideas have been received from Mr. J. H. Lamble, Nottingham and District Technical College, and Mr. A. C. Bubb, Hendon P.L.]

AN EXTERNAL DEGREE ?

If one may permissibly assess latent interest in a topic by the response to its ventilation, I must express great satisfaction with the correspondence columns in the November *Assistant*. The subject of external degrees and the struggles towards their achievement would appear to be of more than mere academic interest.

To Mr. Sykes of Warrington I say: Dear Paul, your fears are groundless. Accurate though your fire was in its aim to bring me down from the stratosphere with a loud crash, it was ammunition needlessly expended. If there is one weakness to which the External Novitiate is not prone, it is a propensity for an ivory tower. *His* tower is a cold front room with a vista of unimaginable bleakness leading to an objective which seems eternally remote. It is a source of strength, this soul-testing rigour: it leads to mastery of both poetry and plumbing—literally (after 2 years at the Pierian fount I have no taste for idle metaphor).

I feel particularly indebted to Mr. Stych for the mild correctives he administered to my more excessive claims. About the External Advisory Service he is quite right. Since originally drafting the article I have had occasion to review their offerings more closely, and I have found much encouragement from their suggestions. But I stick outrageously to the (I felt) quite minor point—I was startled to hear him refer to my "insistence"—re quotations.

The letter which made me feel most uncomfortable was Miss Fisher's—her phrase "yet the disposition persists" is most true. It went home directly and directed itself to my by now absurdly conditioned reflexes. Supposing the extension of one's studying days into early middle age is a kind of compulsion neurosis? I can only admit that it is a real danger, but dangerous to whom? To the student himself it is a harmless accretion, a mere eccentricity which we can surely allow him. His final objective will be reached one day; when it is, he will

be the first to realise it, if he is not wholly obsessed. And more important, his library should be the first to benefit from his obsession. In the case of an external degree hard won, not only is it *finis coronat opus* but *finis coronat bibliothecam*.

D. E. GERARD,
Deputy City Librarian, Exeter P.L.

THE PRIVATE PRESS

In his review of *The private press: its achievement and influence*, Mr. Binns does well to emphasize that after 1893 Cobden-Sanderson's work as a binder was almost entirely confined to design. If he turns to page 20, however, he will find he has unjustly accused me of failing to mention the Cuala Press.

GILBERT TURNER,
Borough Librarian, Richmond P.L.

CLASSIFICATION

May I, as a member of the staff of "a certain bibliography" interrupt my task of usurping the responsibilities of the U.D.C. in order to comment on the review of Sayers' *Introduction to library classification*, 9th edition, in your current issue?

I am sorry to see your comparatively young reviewer chiding the elderly author for introducing a new theoretical approach. After all, an elder who is not content to rest on his laurels, who goes on digesting new ideas, where necessary throwing out the old, is not so common a phenomenon. A journal representing mainly the younger section of the profession should be the last quarter to react with damp disapproval.

Why is classification still an educational problem—in your reviewer's words "a dreaded subject"? One reason is undoubtedly the air of oracular mystery and the burden of pure folklore which have become attached to the exposition of the Dewey classification. There is a good example in this review. Students are solemnly warned to avoid the temptation of "playing" with the mnemonic devices of Dewey. Such "play", one

gathers, is a "whim" and the result a "concoction". May I reassure students that there is no highly subtle nor secret art, known only to initiates, in the use of these devices? They are there to be used, with the normal care that classifying always demands. Another example which I have not seen in print lately, but which may be still going the rounds, is "Do not use the Relative Index, except as a last resort." The whole point of an index to anything is, of course, that it should be used first.

Is it not also time that we delivered ourselves from the false antithesis between enumeration and synthetic classification? Both factors occur in most modern schemes, including Colon, which merely exploits a pathway along which Dewey and U.D.C. tentatively ventured. The appearance of Colon-based ideas in the new *Introduction* is to be welcomed: there is no better method of approaching the Dewey labyrinth than through a preliminary study of the simple facet pattern of, say, half a dozen of the Colon main classes.

E. J. COATES,
*Chief Subject Cataloguer, British
National Bibliography.*

[Mr. C. W. TAYLOR replies:

Mr. Coates wanders well away from the substance of my review, and raises points not relevant to the issue. The review was primarily directed to the young Registration student, and I will curb my natural inclination to cross swords and limit my observations to essentials:—

1. Students could perhaps claim that classification has become an educational problem not through any air of oracular mystery and folk-lore encouraged by practising librarians and tutors, but through the enthusiastic, if misguided, attempts by exponents to introduce into Dewey a principle which was never intended for the classification of books.

2. The U.D.C. is the accepted special version of D.C. for the arrangement of bibliographies. Why attempt to create another completely individual scheme, based on the same schedules?

3. Rightly or wrongly, the Colon scheme is excluded from the syllabus

for the L.A. examinations. The new edition of the *Introduction*, which is a standard text-book, by pressing its claims, will only tend to confuse candidates.

4. The recent ruling of the examiners allows candidates to gain pass marks by using Dewey in the normal accepted manner. Why should we encourage them to risk failure by following a much more elaborate and detailed approach to the practical classification examination than that adopted by Mr. Coates and the many others who satisfied the examiners prior to 1950 and the advent of B.N.B.]

CATALOGUING RULES

As a student of cataloguing, I am struggling to master the many pettifogging rules in the A—A Code. I am aware that there is a committee in the process of revising these rules, but I should like to see something done for my followers, not descendants.

I suggest that each Division of the A.A.L. should set up a committee to consider the rules and formulate a revised code. Then a committee consisting of one member from each Divisional committee could co-ordinate them into a reasonable set of rules for presentation to the Library Association.

CATHERINE R. MORTON,
Loughborough.

A.A.L. CONFERENCE

I hope that neither staff guilds nor junior assistants will be influenced by Mr. Chapman's letter in the November issue. Every staff guild has as one of its aims the encouragement of members to take an active interest in professional affairs. If it can afford the expense, why should not the guild subsidise a junior assistant at the A.A.L. Conference? The assistant is usually expected to tell his colleagues something about the conference at a later guild meeting, and if enthusiasm and interest can be spread in this way, the expenditure is legitimate. Other bodies send delegates to conferences and I am sure that none of them is considered a "shameless beggar"!

Mr. Chapman would prefer to see

our juniors gathering rosebuds Of course they all enjoy this, but some of them are also interested in their chosen profession. It is a fallacy that interest in the latter precludes enjoyment of life: any library assistant worth his salt is capable of "living a double life."

To any junior who has read Mr. Chapman's last sentence I would say, "Don't believe it." A.A.L. conferences are not dull affairs unless you deliberately sleep through them—if you can. Visiting new places, meeting new people, discussions and parties, official and unofficial, provide plenty of scope for assistants to enlarge their experience of librarianship—and life—if they so desire.

JEAN BINDER,
Reference Librarian, St. Albans P.L.

FILING AND STORAGE OF SPECIAL MATERIALS

The London and Home Counties Branch of the Library Association have entrusted me with the organisation of a two-day Exhibition of library equipment to be held at Chaucer House on 11th and 12th January next. The theme of this particular display is modern British and American methods of filing and storage of special materials—pamphlets, maps, atlases, microfilm, films, newspapers, gramophone records, illustrations, archives, etc.—with which the modern library is particularly concerned in these days. We are also fortunate in having three special exhibits: the handling, filing, etc., of news cuttings (prepared by the Press Library of the Royal Institute of International Affairs); the selection, mounting and filing of illustrations (prepared by Paddington Public Libraries); and the handling, repair, filing, etc., of archives (prepared by the Westminster City Archivist).

The Exhibition will be open each day from noon to 8.30 p.m., and on Tuesday, 11th January there will be a meeting at 6.30 p.m., at which papers will be given on the principles and current methods of filing special material in libraries. As you will see,

the subject of the Exhibition has an interest for libraries throughout the country, and if you can give the Exhibition any publicity in which the fact that all librarians are welcome is stressed, I know that the Branch will be most grateful.

ROBERT L. COLLISON,
Reference Librarian, Westminster P.L.

FINES

[Refers to letter on p. 168 of the November issue]

Oh Mr. Thompson! Suppose that you are standing in a queue at the library and the man in front of you refuses to pay his fine. Would you not feel that it is an unjust world when you found you had to pay a fine too and stumped up because you thought twopence not worth "brawling" about? Why should the reader be patted on the shoulder because he made a fuss and you be penalized because you are quiet and polite and possess a social conscience?

Whether fines *should* be charged and whether they *may* be charged does not concern this particular question. If fines *are* charged, they *should* be charged. Twopence may not be worth brawling about, but the principle behind it should certainly not be waived for this kind of discrimination. But perhaps Mr. Thompson, you really believe that he who shouts loudest need not pay his library fines.

A. P. SHEARMAN,
*Senior Assistant, Slough Branch,
Bucks Co. L.*

[A similar letter has been received from Mr. N. V. Read, West Sussex Co.L.]

BLACK-LISTED POSTS

We agree with "Thomas Clearwater" [November issue] on the "set-backs to the profession which have occurred at Thurrock, Bath and Islington," and we feel bound to comment on the statement that "the applicants [at Islington] included a library school lecturer, whom we presume has something to say about professional standards and behaviour to his students."

We regret very much any applications for black-listed posts for the general harm which results when such posts continue to be filled in spite of our professional claims. We shall continue to instruct students in the reasonable ideals of professional employment, and hope to continue to resemble Cæsar's wife in at least one point. The publicity given to the applications has placed lecturers in a position no less "intolerably embarrassing" than that ascribed to the Islington Deputy, and they have not as a body earned that embarrassment.

The names of the applicants to Islington seem to have been widely known before the appointment, and that is usually the case with any appointment which is in the eyes of

the profession unsatisfactory. May we suggest that in future when the national officers of the A.A.L. learn of such applications, letters be sent to members asking for a denial or confirmation of the supposed applications. If a denial is forthcoming, no harm would be done, we could hope, but if not the names of such persons might very well be listed as applicants without comment in the *Assistant Librarian*. Even a refusal to reply might be reported without critical comment in the *Assistant Librarian*.

This suggestion for moral sanctions might lead to professional standards, which cannot be enforced by legal sanctions.

NEVILLE DAIN and P. M. WHITEMAN,
Leeds School of Librarianship.

COUNCIL NOTES

NOVEMBER 14.

THE FIRST item on the agenda, "posts advertised at inadequate salaries", was considered to be of such importance that it is dealt with separately below. The Council then received a very favourable report of the A.A.L. Session at the Hastings Conference, the only criticism made of Mr. Moon's paper being that it had activated discussion amongst chiefs rather than more junior members of the profession, and we passed on feeling that this had happened before and that there must be a moral somewhere.

There was then an introductory discussion on the structure of the Library Association, with particular regard to the non-existence of a municipal libraries section. The Council were aware that there was a movement amongst the special sections to suggest the creation of a municipal libraries section in order to rationalise the structure of the Library Association and to make it more satisfactory from their point of view. At the moment, some of them at least feel that the special sections are appendages to a body whose norm is public librarianship. The immediate reaction of municipal librarians is, of course, that the Library Association is already over-sectionalised, and that the creation of yet another section is ridiculous. However, there are some who feel that municipal librarians suffer because there is no section specifically designed to consider and react to their problems—the lack of organised municipal comment on local government reorganisation has been cited as an example—and, indeed, that municipal problems can only be discussed in a council or a committee consisting partly of non-public librarians. Even county librarians are not in this position. It was agreed to circulate a memorandum and discuss the Association's reaction to the proposal in the future, paying particular regard to the unquestioned continuance of the A.A.L. in the proposed new circumstances.

Having appointed its representatives to the Library Association Council and Committees for 1955, and having considered the reports of its own committees, the Council was told that no further information was yet available on Appendix Two of the new local government salary

scales; and must just patiently await a further announcement. It seemed to be generally agreed that if the A.P.T. III award was vague, the reference to professional librarians in Appendix Two of the National Joint Council review of the "Scheme of Conditions of Service" reached a new record depth of doubt.

The growth of the Association's correspondence courses and its publications programme has reached such a degree that the Council has called for a report on a possible scheme of reorganisation.

1955 is the Association's diamond jubilee year, and all Divisions are being asked to further consider possible means of celebration.

During the day most of the Council had an opportunity of inspecting the recently opened Library Association library in its new quarters, and whilst we were impressed by what we saw, there was general regret at the lack of publicity which had been given to London student librarians concerning its hours of opening.

The Committee meetings produced their usual quota of routine consideration, but there were one or two items worthy of special note. These included discussion on the usefulness of periodic conferences of correspondence course tutors; and a detailed programme for the 1955 week-end conference, to be held in Birmingham in April, with "Publicity" as the theme. The *Assistant Librarian* is to be published monthly in 1955. The Finance and General Purposes Committee deplored "the fact that this Association cannot increase payments to Divisions until this Association receives increased capitation grants from the Library Association," which would perhaps be a somewhat sombre note on which to end this series of Council Notes (not that finance is the most important constituent ingredient in a successful Division).

But one final resolution was passed which will fix the attention of the next Council firmly on the future. It is no secret that the Honorary Treasurer of the Library Association has been stumping certain parts of the country advocating in a genteel and pleasant way the abolition of the A.A.L. Not directly, of course, but delicately and skilfully. He is, however, sowing the sort of seed which grows best on stony ground, and the Council have set up a committee to clarify the basic and distinctive policy of the A.A.L. and to consider methods for the adequate publicising of that policy and for its effective implementation. Those who would like to abolish the A.A.L. might well read the opening paragraphs of Somerset Maugham's *The razor's edge*, which the author explains is going to end neither with a death nor a marriage. Some people tend to forget that there was a marriage of the L.A. and A.A.L. in 1929, and, as Maugham would have said, interest has passed to the next generation. The best future for the L.A. as well as the A.A.L. lies in the most efficient exploitation of the one by the other. And finally, on this point, I am indebted to a recent B.B.C. programme, *Any Questions*, in which it was said that there are in Britain to-day far too many people banded together to abolish this or prevent the other, instead of directing their energies to construction.

BLACK POSTS

THE CONSTANT REPETITION of a name in pleasant or unpleasant circumstances can, in a relatively short space of time, build up a reputation that will last for years to come. Islington is such a name. The unhappy story of the attempt to attract applications from qualified librarians is a pitiable one. The A.A.L. Council hope that this will be the last chapter of a sorry tragedy in which authorities and individual members alike have played parts they may well wish to forget.

The circumstances of this particular appointment are only too well

known at the moment to so many of us; but there are some who will not know, and others coming on afterwards, for whom the background concerning Islington should be placed on record. The facts are simple. Islington advertised for a chief librarian at a salary which was below a reasonable level. Now for some time the Library Association, the Society of Municipal and County Chief Librarians, and Nalگو have been actively protesting against posts advertised at inadequate salaries as they appeared. The ultimate drastic step has been for one or more of these bodies to "blacklist" the post and leave it to the good sense and conscience of members not to apply. This policy has become increasingly well supported by individual members of the various associations who realise that this form of sanction can be successful. One of the encouraging things about Islington was that the final number of applicants was the lowest on record—but such action can only be successful if it is unanimous. Of course, the fact that there were even three "extra-mural" candidates was unfortunate, but this figure was considerably below that reached for Bath.

The A.A.L. Council recently considered its attitude towards the individuals who did apply. As the A.A.L. had not pronounced publicly against this specific advertisement (although there could have been no doubt about the Association's attitude in general), and as the individuals themselves agreed that the applications had been unfortunate, it is decided to concentrate on such future action as might be necessary, using Divisional mechanism to deter applications in approved cases. It is here that individuals can play their parts. The opinions of those with whom we work are most important—and can play a vital part if expressed before a stand is taken.

There are some things which should be remembered. First, the position of potential candidates within the system is a most difficult one. Secondly, the most effective time for intervention is before the post is advertised so far as the authority is concerned, and before the application is made as far as the individual is concerned: it would seem that some authorities have an oriental phobia about losing face. Thirdly, it may sometimes be that the salary protested against was the salary fixed by the authority or its establishment committee and that it is, in fact, below that recommended by the libraries committee. Fourthly, it remains impossible to fathom the mentality of an authority which will appoint from a list of applicants which it knows excludes candidates at least as well qualified, but whose higher sense of professional duty has prevented them from applying. A possible explanation is that the authority has a poor opinion of its library service—but more probably it has a complete absence of real civic pride. Finally, it is impossible to understand how a council influenced by true trade union principles could ever find itself in the position reached at Islington. With the innocence of the offended, Islington authority members might want to know why they have been singled out from Bath, Durham County and Thurrock. They have not been singled out: they chose the path themselves.

The importance of the gradings of chief librarians is a matter of concern to the A.A.L. Our examination of the application of the "A.P.T. III" award revealed too many cases where the salary being paid to the chief prevented the re-grading of many posts above A.P.T. III. Nevertheless, the principle is the same, whatever the grade. To apply for a post in the clerical scale demanding professional qualifications is violating the same principle of putting the common weal before personal gain. To cheapen yourself cheapens the profession of which you are a part.

One problem remains, How should one treat a successful (or

unsuccessful) candidate for a "black" post? To hate in the heat of the moment is wrong—but human. To propose to hate without end is indefensible. To exclude or attempt to exclude the authority from membership would mean disaster to the innocent members of the staff and those who will join them. On the other hand, it would be hypocrisy to seek out the hand of the "successful" to shake it. To ignore him is to side-step a problem—a real problem if the appointment is local. Pity is probably the most Christian reaction. This is especially so for one whose internal promotion has been forced upon him. One can only hope that his authority's attitude will improve when they think their unpleasant "face" is safe, and that for the sake of those whose future is in his hands he will rise to the occasion. One can hope, but in pity must also doubt.

W.T.

ELECTION OF NATIONAL COUNCILLORS FOR 1955

We, being appointed scrutineers for the above election, declare the following to be the result of the poll:—

Elected.	No. of Votes.
1. Phillips	1,676
2. Tomlinson	1,560
3. Willson	1,494
4. Carver	1,439
5. Smith	1,381
6. Clark	1,329
Not Elected.	No. of Votes.
7. Enser	1,253

Total voting papers returned 2,252
Invalid voting papers 68
Valid voting papers counted 2,184

(Signed) J. S. BRISTOW.
Presiding Officer.

Scrutineers:
E. Moon.
Derek Austin.

10th December, 1954. W. S. Hudson.
Chaucer House, P. M. Perrin.
London, W.1. D. B. Gibson.

WHO'S WHO IN THE A.A.L. - I

Wherein we shall try to fill some of the gaps in a recently published reference book.

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LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LIBRARY

The Library has now been transferred to the Third Floor at Chaucer House and an attractive reading room providing seats for 22 readers is a feature of the new premises. A description of the Library and an account of the facilities provided will be published shortly in the *Library Association Record*. Members are reminded that books may be borrowed for home reading and a postal service is available for any member in the United Kingdom unable to visit Chaucer House. The Rules of the Library

will be found in the *Library Association Year Book*, 1954, and the *Students' Handbook*, 1954, on page 37 in each case.

The hours of opening are Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 a.m.—6 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, 9 a.m.—8 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.—12 noon. There will be no evening opening during the month of August, nor during the week after Christmas. The new hours will come into force on Tuesday, 4th January, 1955.

SWEDISH LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANSHIP

The report of an interview with Miss Kerstin Munck af Rosenschöld,
Library Adviser to the Swedish Board of Education.

This article will be read most usefully in conjunction with the paper on Swedish libraries by Mr. Bengt Hjelmqvist, delivered in the course of the 1954 L.A. Conference and published in the Conference Proceedings.

Will you first say something about the background against which Swedish libraries must be viewed?

Sweden covers an area that is nearly double (9/5) the size of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland together, but our density of population is only about one-thirteenth of yours. Only three cities—Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö—have more than 100,000 inhabitants. Out of 109 municipal library systems having professional staff forty have only *one* and twenty *two* trained librarians each. In communities with less than 6,000 inhabitants the library staff is still normally non-professional and part-time.

How are librarians recruited in Sweden? At what age?

Some candidates are recruited through vocational guidance during their last year at school (at the age of 18-20); others find their way to libraries during or after their university studies. (An academic degree is normally necessary for admittance to our library school). *Some* active recruiting is going on all the time, but I am afraid few real efforts to find suitable candidates have been made.

Thus, the age when prospective librarians make their choice of career varies considerably. Compared with conditions in your country many of our candidates enter the profession late, at the age of 24 to 26, some even later than that.

What is the method of formal training?

The Swedish State Library School is run by the Library Advisers and was started in 1926. Up to 1952 the course was held every second year, now it is annual. As previously mentioned, applicants have to be university graduates (most commonly they have a degree in the humanities, *fil. kand.* or *fil. mag.*, requiring between three and five years of study). In addition to the degree, which in exceptional cases may be substituted by some equivalent qualifications, the students must have a six-months' elementary training in library work before being admitted to the school. In principle this training is given by our 24 county libraries and four other large municipal libraries. (In Sweden county libraries are also municipal libraries). The elementary course can be taken by anyone who has successfully completed about a third of his academic degree. This pre-school training is a combination of practical and theoretical studies. The two first months are purely practical and serve also as a probationary period, after which unsuitable candidates should be turned away. The theoretical part consists of a four months' correspondence course held by the *Folkbibliotekens Korrespondensinstitut* (The Public Library Correspondence Institute) at Uppsala Public Library. This course must be completed by the student while he or she is working in the training library. A member of the staff is responsible for supervising the work of the student.

The correspondence course is free of charge as is the apprenticeship period in the library. The student is allowed to receive a small salary during the last two months of his elementary training.

The total length of experience of those admitted to the school varies between eight and eighteen months.

How is the library school organized?

The course lasts from October 1st until March 31st (with a break of about three weeks for Christmas holidays). The students pay a fee of some £16 for the whole course; efforts to make it free of charge have not yet been successful. Some 25 students are admitted each year. The school is subsidised by a special State grant. Not included in the school's budget are the salaries of the library adviser, who acts as leader of the school, and other members of the staff of the Library Advisers who teach or in other ways participate in the running of the school.

The school has its own premises in the same building as the office of the Library Advisers.

The curriculum includes the history of books and libraries, the administration and organization of public libraries, book selection and book knowledge, reference work, bibliographies, cataloguing and classification.

The faculty consists of the three library advisers and, in all, some forty librarians and subject specialists from the Stockholm area.

The lecture method is only used to a small extent. Seminar and discussion technique is especially favoured. In some subjects tasks are carried out by students working in small groups. This is particularly the case in library administration and organization, which is run as a series of weekly seminars all through the course.

At the beginning of the autumn term the whole class is taken out into the country for a week to make a kind of sociological survey of some district large enough to be able to support a professional full-time librarian. The students interview local authorities about financial and administrative problems, study the school system and the libraries, obtain information about all kinds of social, religious, political and civic activity, and round it off with a Gallup poll about the public's interest in books and reading. The material is collected, stencilled and distributed among the students (but not published, of course, as the survey is made with no pretension whatever as to scientific standard). During the following series of seminars all problems are put with this actual district in mind—to make the work more realistic and more interesting. This method has proved very satisfactory. As a by-product our students gain some useful knowledge of problems which they may have missed altogether during their university years.

In order to get their diplomas the students have to pass examinations in the seven main subjects mentioned above. They are awarded graded marks which are shown on their diplomas.

Is this the only library school in Sweden?

No, Stockholm Public Library in 1948 organized a school for the training of their own staff. It is divided into two parts: one three-year course based on *studentexamen* (higher school certificate, the examination taken at the end of 12-13 years of schooling) and leading to an assistant's degree, and a librarian's degree, based on the lower degree and granted after the completion of an advanced course. So far 25 students have passed the assistant's examination while none has taken the librarian's degree.

Are you satisfied with your present education for librarianship?

No, we have not yet reached a solution that can be considered satisfactory. The whole question is constantly under discussion and it is likely to be taken up officially in the near future. The staff of university, research and special libraries are also interested in the problem and some kind of survey of meaning and purpose regarding the training of staff for all these types of libraries will be necessary.

There has been much discussion recently in England of the practicability of dividing staff into professional and non-professional categories. Do you have this division in Sweden?

Yes, we have, and in my opinion it is not only reasonable but necessary. It has been repeated—almost *ad nauseam*—that all library duties do not require professional knowledge or skill: 30—40—50 per cent of the tasks carried out in an ordinary public library are of a clerical nature and should be carried out by staff with suitable qualifications for doing that kind of work. This theory is accepted by most librarians in Sweden—but it is not yet always applied in practice. An unofficial standard recommends one clerical to two professionals in smaller libraries and two clericals to three professionals in larger libraries. Even in one-man libraries there is need for clerical help which can be provided on a part-time basis.

Need I stress the arguments for a division of duties? That it is waste of money to let professionally trained staff do tasks that clerical staff can do as well or even better; the result will invariably be low salaries. That the service will suffer if untrained staff is asked to do professional work. That professional librarians need a certain amount of daily challenge in their work in order to keep mentally and professionally alert and to develop their service. It is the librarian's job to plan the work, obtain the money for it, choose the right books and other material and bring it to the right reader so that it gets used by those who need it—whether they are conscious of their needs or not. If the librarian has to fill half his day with checking, shelving, counting statistics, typing cards, etc., etc., his primary duties must suffer.

What is the status of the librarian in Sweden?

In our country the educational standard of librarians roughly corresponds to that of *läroverksadjunkter*, the lower grade of teachers in secondary schools, who are placed in grades 27 and 29 on the civil servant salary scale. Their commencing salaries are approximately £1,130 to £1,260 a year. All salaries for the staff of public libraries are regulated through negotiations between the librarians' union and The federation of Swedish towns. The commencing salary of a library school graduate is, however, only £733 (grade 19) which is two grades lower than the commencing salaries of elementary school teachers. If they do not seek promotion they will automatically reach grade 22 (£850) after twelve years, with an increase every third year. A first assistant is placed in grade 21 (£808) and reaches grade 24 (£953) in due course. The salaries of librarians in the smallest one-man libraries start at 21. In larger libraries the amount is graded in proportion to the size of the population. There are twenty positions in the grades 27—29 and eleven positions in grades 30—33 (£1,324—£1,490). Thus, only thirty-one positions out of a total of some 450 in public libraries have reached the same level as the one held by secondary school teachers.

It should be noted that people holding positions requiring equivalent training in municipalities—towns and cities—usually are better paid.

This is, of course, even more true about people working in business and industry.

One result of the fact that librarians' salaries are among the bottom ones as compared with people with equivalent qualifications is that only one-fifth of the profession consists of men.

Will you say something of the organization of the Swedish library profession?

There are several associations of and organizations for librarians in Sweden. The most comprehensive is *Sveriges allmänna biblioteksörening*, (SAB) our Library Association. It has 623 individual and 1,539 institutional members. Three different groups have formed divisions within the association in order to promote their special interests: the children's and young people's librarians, the hospital librarians, and the committee members. As regards the various activities carried out by the association I would like to refer to Mr. Hjelmqvist's paper.

In 1938 a public librarians union was formed, *Svenska Folkbibliotekariöföreningen* (SFF), The Association of Swedish Public Librarians. Originally it was affiliated to the Society of Municipal Officers (corresponding to NALGO) but in 1952 it joined instead the Central Organization of Academics in Sweden (SACO). The aims and activities of the Association of Swedish Public Librarians were described by Mr. Möhlenbrock in an article in the LAR 1951, p. 399-401.

In 1952 the part-time working, non-professional librarians formed a union, *Deltidsanställda folkbibliotekariers förening*.

Besides these groups there are several organizations formed by the staffs of research and special libraries, e.g. *Svenska bibliotekariersamfundet* and *Tekniska litteratursamfundet*.

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ROUND THE DIVISIONS—II

NORTH WALES

THE NORTH WALES DIVISION was inaugurated at Llandudno on 13th April, 1949. It can therefore claim to be one of the youngest Divisions and is also probably one of the smallest, the membership being from 30 to 40. But the area covered is a large one, comprising the Counties of Anglesey, Caernarvon, Denbigh, Flint, Merioneth and Montgomery. A glance at the map will show that the population is very scattered, with the exception of a close concentration on the coastal belt, and in the industrial area in the east. The libraries in this large area are scattered far and wide, consisting of a county library in Anglesey, Caernarvonshire County Library and a public library at Caernarvon, public libraries at Bangor, Colwyn Bay, Conwy, Llandudno, Rhyl and Wrexham, Denbighshire County Library at Ruthin, Flintshire County Library at Mold, Merionethshire County Library at Dolgelly, and Montgomeryshire County Library at Newtown, all with numerous branches. In addition, there is a University library at Bangor, and a library in the Adult Education Centre at Coleg Harlech.

The distances involved indicate that the main difficulty of the Division is that of holding meetings at centres convenient for members. This restricts the number of meetings held annually. Nevertheless, the Division manages to keep its head above water, holding three or four meetings a year. They are usually held on Wednesday

afternoons, this being the most common half-day. The meetings take various forms, ranging from summer-time visits to places of interest in the area, to winter-time talks by A.A.L. officials, booksellers, novelists, archivists, etc. The Division has also taken in its stride visits to printing works, museums, and in fact, any place which will provide interest and instruction for assistants engaged in study. The venue for meetings varies west, east and centre. However, the meetings held at Colwyn Bay, Rhyl and Llandudno have proved the most popular.

It may be of interest to point out that the Division covers what is considered the most Welsh part of Wales, consequently the vast majority of our members are bilingual. The last issue of the News-sheet which the Division publishes was in fact the first bilingual one. Apart from the regular publication of *Cambria*, as it is called, the Division has also published a Register of methods, compiled from the returns of a questionnaire circulated to all participating libraries. This was intended to help assistants studying for the L.A. examinations, and tabulated various methods of book issuing, charging, classification systems, etc.

The Division may be small and scattered, but it has every intention of keeping on with the good work of providing opportunities for exchanging ideas and meeting socially, two aims which would otherwise be impossible of realization.

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